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What does the Bible say about prayerlessness?

Question: "What does the Bible say about prayerlessness?"

Answer: [Prayer](#) is the lifeblood of a Christian's walk with God. Prayer connects us to God, prayer is an active way to love and connect with others, and prayer makes room in the pray-er's heart for God's correcting voice. The Bible says to "pray continually" ([1 Thessalonians 5:17](#)), so anything other than a continual attitude of prayer and communion with God is sin. Anything that interrupts our connection to God or leads to self-reliance is wrong.

We could look at Adam and Eve's actions in [Genesis 3](#) as a type of prayerlessness. They eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and are too ashamed to speak with the Lord as He comes to meet them in the garden. They are disconnected from God in their sin; their communication with Him is interrupted. Adam and Eve's "prayerlessness" was sin, and it was caused by sin.

Can you imagine someone claiming to be your best friend and never talking to you? Whatever friendship was there would certainly be strained. Similarly, a relationship with God is impoverished and fatigued without communication. Prayerlessness is antithetical to a good relationship with God. God's people will have a natural desire to communicate with their Lord. "In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly" ([Psalm 5:3](#)). The biblical commands to pray are accompanied by wonderful promises: "The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth" ([Psalm 145:18](#)).

Christ is our best example of prayerfulness. He Himself was a man of prayer (see [Luke 3:21](#); [5:16](#); [9:18, 28](#); [11:1](#)), and He taught His followers to pray ([Luke 11:2-4](#)). If the Son of Man saw a personal need to pray, how much more should we see the same need in ourselves?

Prayerlessness ignores the gift of [intercession](#) that God has given us. We are called to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ ([James 5:16](#)). Paul often solicited the prayers of God's people on his behalf ([Ephesians 6:19](#); [Colossians 4:3](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:25](#)), and he was faithful to pray for them ([Ephesians 1:16](#); [Colossians 1:9](#)). The prophet Samuel saw prayers on behalf of the people of Israel as a necessary part of his ministry: "As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you" ([1 Samuel 12:23](#)). According to Samuel, prayerlessness is a sin.

Prayerlessness is defiance toward God's command to love others. And we are not only to pray for people who are easy to pray for. "I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people" ([1 Timothy 2:1](#)). Jesus tells us that we must also pray for those who persecute us ([Matthew 5:44](#)). This is the message of Christ, to love and support everyone with prayer, even those who are hard to love.

Prayer makes room for the correcting voice of God. Prayerlessness weakens our ability to hear Christ when He whispers words of correction or conviction to our spirits. [Hebrews 12:2](#) reminds us that Christ is the "pioneer and perfecter of faith." Without His Spirit living in our hearts, we would be on a rough road following our own judgments. As we pray for God's will to be done "on earth as it is in heaven" ([Matthew 6:10](#)), the contrariness of our own wills is revealed.

[Matthew 26:41](#) offers another admonition: "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation." Prayerlessness clouds our hearts to the temptations surrounding us and leads to further sin. We only become wise to the ways of our hearts through the Spirit's illumination and direction. And it's only in the Spirit's power that our prayers are effective (see [Romans](#)

[8:26-27](#)).

Prayer is our lifeline and connection to God. Christ showed the opposite of prayerlessness in His walk on earth and modelled a prayer-filled life.

Recommended Resource: [The Prayer That Turns the World Upside Down: The Lord's Prayer as a Manifesto for Revolution by R. Albert Mohler Jr.](#)

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